

them to be able see and feel what I had." Mr. Devitt accomplished his mission as millions of people in hundreds of American communities have visited the Moving Wall during its 20 years of existence.

The Moving Wall was built by Devitt, Norris Shears, Gerry Haver and other Vietnam veterans, and was displayed for the first time in Tyler, TX in October of 1984. Currently, there are two Moving Walls, which crisscross the country from April to November each year.

The 462-strong VFW Post 2164, commanded by Korean War veteran Sonny Carson, and the citizens of Wheaton, IL are to be commended for raising the \$26,000 required to bring the Wall to Wheaton. The Wall's presence in Wheaton was a particularly poignant event as the names of 14 of its sons are engraved upon the Wall's granite face, including a Medal of Honor recipient, James Howard Monroe.

The goal of bringing the Moving Wall to Wheaton was to help close old wounds, and to educate the community about the war in Vietnam and its profound effect on our Nation and our veterans. It is my pleasure to congratulate the members of VFW Post 2164 and the citizens of Wheaton for achieving that goal, and for helping the rest of us honor and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

MONEY FOLLOWS THE PERSON

Mr. SMITH. Madam President, my job as a Senator is to help protect and defend the freedoms of all Americans. Among the most basic freedoms are those we most often overlook: the freedom to choose where we live—for example, among family and friends and not among strangers—the freedom to walk down your neighborhood street, and not in a restricted courtyard; and the freedom to be an active member in your community.

All too often, these basic freedoms are denied to older Americans and Americans with disabilities. I have noticed an alarming trend in this country: we are unnecessarily isolating people with disabilities from their communities, friends, families, and loved ones by placing them in institutional care facilities.

Many of these Americans should not be in a nursing home or other institutional setting. Many Americans with disabilities could be better served—and better integrated into their communities—by allowing them to live in community-based homes.

However, recent data indicates that 70 percent of Medicaid dollars are spent on institutional care and only 30 percent are spent on community services for the disabled. Because Medicaid requires that States provide nursing home care for Americans with disabilities but does not require the same for community-based services, many individuals with disabilities and older Americans are forced to live in isolated settings.

In order to preserve the freedoms of our friends in the disabled community and their loved ones, we must do something to reverse this trend. I would therefore like to join my distinguished colleague from Iowa as a cosponsor of the Money Follows the Person Act of 2003. The Senator from Iowa and I first introduced the provisions of this act as an amendment to S. 1, the Medicare and Prescription Drug Improvement Act of 2003.

This bill would enact the President's 2004 Money Follows the Person Program to give people with disabilities the freedom to choose where they want to live. Under this legislation, Oregon's effort to help an individual move out of an institutional facility and into a community home would be 100 percent federally funded for 1 year. After that first year, the Federal Government would pay its usual rate. Under the provisions of this bill, States can take advantage of \$350 million annually for 5 years for a total of \$1.75 billion.

These dollars can help reintegrate countless older Americans and Americans with disabilities into a setting where they can be more active citizens. For instance, this bill is supported by the Oregon Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans because it helps honor and reintegrate those veterans whose disabilities resulted from noble and selfless service to this Nation.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Olmstead Supreme Court decision, we know that the need-less institutionalization of Americans with disabilities constitutes discrimination under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Americans everywhere realize the value of integrating Americans with disabilities into our communities. Needlessly isolating productive citizens from their communities, whether they are disabled or not, is unfair and unjust. It is time we work to reintegrate disabled Americans back into our communities.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important bill and to support the freedom of choice for Americans with disabilities.

LAOS

Mr. FEINGOLD. Madam President, I rise today to express my concern over recent events in Laos. As a member of the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, I have consistently monitored the human rights situation in Laos and other East Asian nations. Recent news reports indicate that the human rights situation continues to deteriorate in Laos, specifically for the Hmong ethnic group.

As many of you may know, two European journalists and their translator, a Hmong-American pastor from Minnesota, were captured by the Lao government on June 4, 2003 and sentenced to 15 years of prison. After serious diplomatic negotiations between the gov-

ernments of Belgium, France, the United States and Laos, they were released from prison on Wednesday. While I am relieved that the Lao government has freed these people, I remain concerned about the continuous allegations of human rights violations by the Lao government. Amnesty International reports that Lao nationals who accompanied the journalists remain in detention without legal representation and are being tortured with sticks and bicycle chains, which I find horrifying. I also find troubling reports by the freed journalists regarding the "sham" trials they experienced.

In addition, Time magazine has recently released two articles that accuse the government of waging a war against the Hmong ethnic community within Laos. The articles state that the Lao government attacked a Hmong village in October, killing 216 people and has threatened to "eradicate" the population of Hmong. Time magazine also claims that "no political dissent has been allowed in [Laos for] 28 years, nor any right of assembly. Scores of political prisoners and youths have been detained for years in dark cells without trial; many have been tortured."

While I cannot confirm the specific allegations of the article, many of my Hmong constituents have raised similar concerns about the human rights conditions in Laos and the welfare of their families and friends who are living there. I strongly believe that the United States cannot ignore violations in Laos. I have consistently supported efforts to promote human rights and democracy in Laos, and in the 106th Congress, sponsored a resolution calling upon the Government of Laos to recognize and to respect the basic human rights of all its citizens, including ethnic and religious minorities.

Once again, I ask the Lao government to allow international humanitarian organizations to have access to areas in which Hmong and other ethnic minorities have resettled, to allow independent monitoring of prison conditions, and to release prisoners who have been arbitrarily arrested because of their political or religious beliefs. These violations must not continue.

THE WEISS REPORT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, during consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 11, I took exception to several findings included in the Weiss Report on Medical Malpractice Caps that I believed misinterpreted the data of the Medical Liability Monitor and the National Practitioner Data Bank. Following the vote on the motion to invoke cloture, I received a report supporting my conclusions from the Physicians Insurance Association of America as well as a statement from the Division of Practitioner Data Banks. I ask unanimous consent that these documents be printed in the RECORD.